

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES PRIORITY

INFO USMISSION GENEVA

AMEMBASSY TUNIS

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E.O. 11652: NA

TAGS: ILI, ELAB, PORG, AR

SUBJECT: US RELATIONS WITH THE ILO

REF: (A) BUENOS AIRES 2926; (B) STATE 038223; (C) STATE
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1. EMBASSY SHOULD EXPRESS TO LABOR MINISTER LIENDO USG'S
SINCERE APPRECIATION FOR HIS WILLINGNESS TO ENCOURAGE HIS
LATIN AMERICAN COLLEAGUES AS WELL AS OTHER THIRD WORLD
COUNTRIES GOVERNMENT REPRESENTATIVES TO ADOPT THOSE MEASURES
IN THE ILO WHICH MIGHT FACILITATE USG'S EARLY RETURN TO
THE ILO. AMBASSADOR SHOULD ALSO INFORM LIENDO US IS WILL-
ING TO WORK WITH ALL FRIENDLY GOVERNMENTS TO THIS END. IN
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YOUR CONVERSATIONS WITH MINISTER LIENDO, YOU MAY WISH TO
DRAW ON THE FOLLOWING, WHICH UPDATES GUIDANCE PROVIDED IN
REFTELS (B) AND (C):

A. IN ANNOUNCING TERMINATION OF US MEMBERSHIP IN THE ILO
PRESIDENT CARTER STATED THAT THE US REMAINS READY TO
RETURN WHENEVER THE ILO IS AGAIN TRUE TO ITS PROPER PRINCI-

PLES AND PROCEDURES. PROGRESS ON THE FOLLOWING THREE ISSUES WOULD BE INSTRUMENTAL IN CREATING THE CONDITIONS WHICH MIGHT ALLOW US TO RETURN TO THE ILO.

B. APPLICATION OF CONVENTIONS: ONE OF THE MOST DIS-COURAGING ASPECTS OF THE 1977 INTERNATIONAL LABOR CONFERENCE WAS ITS REFUSAL FOR ONLY THE SECOND TIME IN 50 YEARS -- 1974 AND 1977 -- TO ACCEPT THE REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON THE APPLICATION OF CONVENTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS (CACR REPORT). THIS ANNUAL REPORT IS THE VERY HEART OF THE ILO'S TRADITIONAL WORK IN THE FIELD OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND WAS ESPECIALLY NOTEWORTHY IN 1977 FOR ITS WARNING AGAINST THE USE OF DOUBLE STANDARDS IN THE APPLICATION OF ILO CONVENTIONS. WE UNDERSTAND THAT ILO COMMITTEE OF EXPERTS ON THE APPLICATION OF CONVENTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS WHICH MET IN GENEVA LAST MONTH HAS DRAFTED EXCELLENT REPORT WHICH, AMONG OTHER THINGS, REAFFIRMS THE BASIC PRINCIPLES CONTAINED IN 1977 REPORT, PARTICULARLY THOSE CONCERNING THE UNIVERSAL APPLICATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS STANDARDS. ALTHOUGH ACTION ON ANY SINGLE ISSUE WOULD NOT NECESSARILY CREATE CONDITIONS ENABLING US TO RETURN TO THE ILO, ACCEPTANCE OF A CACR REPORT BY THE JUNE 1978 INTERNATIONAL LABOR CONFERENCE WHICH REAFFIRMS THOSE BASIC PRINCIPLES WOULD BE VIEWED AS POSITIVE STEP TOWARDS RESTORING INTEGRITY OF ILO COMPLIANCE MACHINERY.

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C. DUE PROCESS: THE ADOPTION OF POLITICALLY INSPIRED RESOLUTIONS MARRED THE ILO'S GOOD RECORD OF DUE PROCESS INVESTIGATIONS. THE CRUCIAL CASE WAS THE 1974 CONDEMNATION OF ISRAEL WITHOUT DUE PROCESS FOR ALLEGED HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS IN THE OCCUPIED ARAB TERRITORIES. THE IMEC COUNTRIES AND G-77 COUNTRIES ARE CURRENTLY DISCUSSING A PROPOSAL WHICH WOULD CAREFULLY SCREEN OUT SUCH RESOLUTIONS IN THE FUTURE. ACCEPTANCE OF SUCH A PROPOSAL BY THE JUNE 1978 CONFERENCE WOULD BE FAVORABLY VIEWED BY THE US.

D. ILO RESTRUCTURING: THE PRINCIPAL ISSUES ARE ENLARGEMENT OF THE GOVERNING BODY (GB) AND THE PRACTICE OF DESIGNATING TEN STATES OF CHIEF INDUSTRIAL IMPORTANCE WHICH HAVE NON-ELECTIVE SEATS ON THE GB. THE US HAS BEEN OPPOSED TO ANY STRUCTURAL CHANGE OF THE GB WHICH WOULD WEAKEN THE INFLUENCE OF THE INDUSTRIALIZED DEMOCRACIES, UNDERMINE THE AUTONOMY OF WORKER AND EMPLOYER REPRESENTATIVES AND LEAD TO THE CREATION OF A SPECIAL REGION FOR EASTERN EUROPE, THUS ASSURING GREATER COMMUNIST REPRESENTATION ON THE GB. THE US HAS NEGATIVE VIEWS OF STRUCTURAL REFORM PROPOSALS NOW UNDER CONSIDERATION BY THE ILO WORKING PARTY ON STRUCTURE. AFL-CIO AND US CHAMBER OF

COMMERCE CONTINUE TO TAKE A GRAVE VIEW OF ANY INCREASE IN
THE SIZE OF THE GB.

3. THE ABOVE ISSUES BEAR ON THE BASIC CONCERNS EXPRESSED
IN OUR NOVEMBER 1975 LETTER OF INTENT TO WITHDRAW. THEY
DO NOT CONSTITUTE ALL OF THE SPECIFIC ISSUES THAT CONCERN
US, NOR CAN WE WHOLLY ANTICIPATE WHAT NEW ISSUES MAY ARISE.
THE ENTIRE RECORD WILL HAVE TO BE WEIGHED IN ANY DECISION
TO RETURN TO THE ILO.

4 EMBASSY SHOULD INFORM LIENDO THAT A SENIOR US GOVERN-
MENT OFFICIAL WILL BE AVAILABLE TO MEET WITH HIM IN GENEVA
AT HIS CONVENIENCE TO DISCUSS THE ABOVE ISSUES AS WELL AS
OTHER AREAS WHERE LIENDO'S EFFORTS MIGHT BE HELPFUL. CHRISTOPHER
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